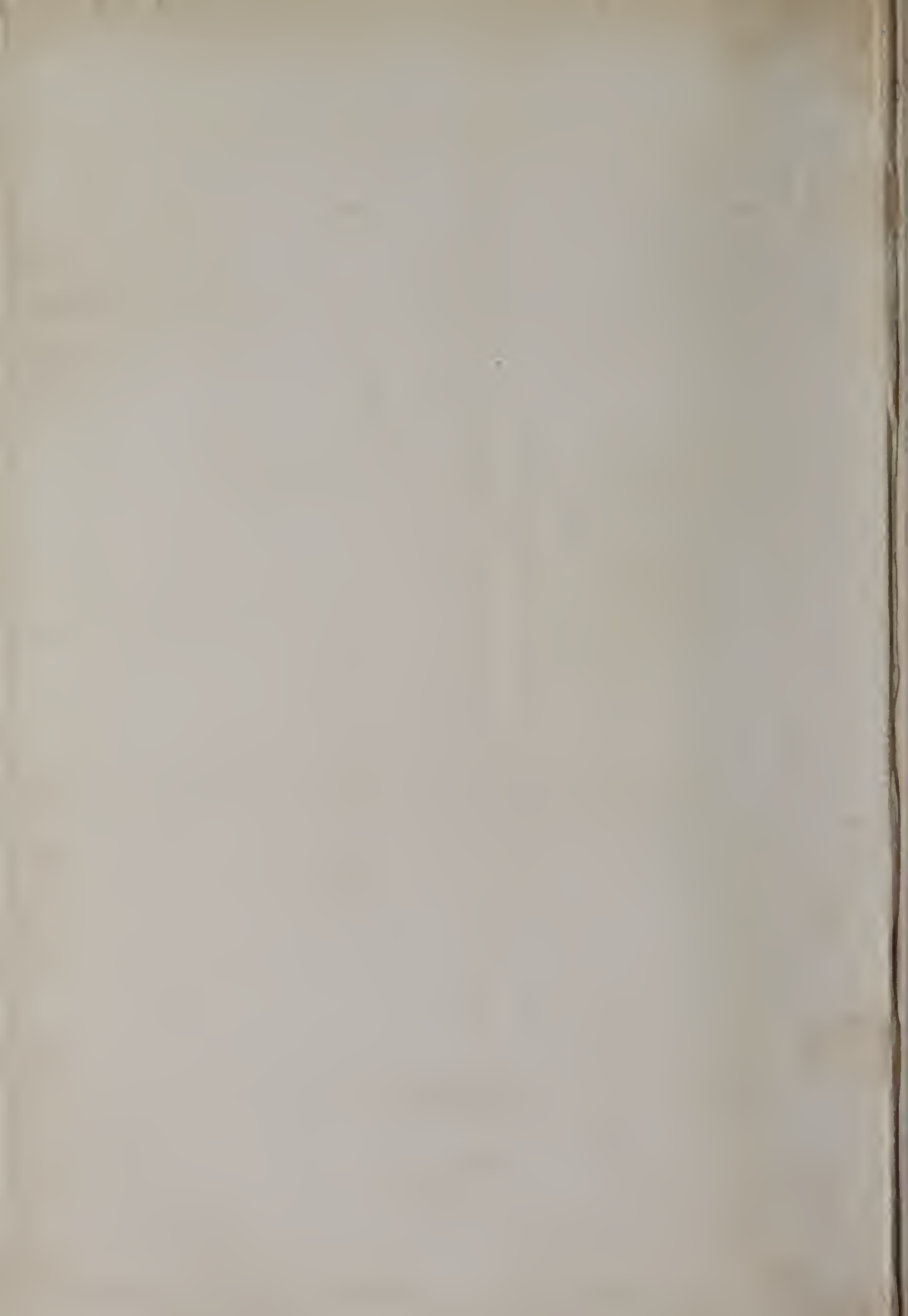


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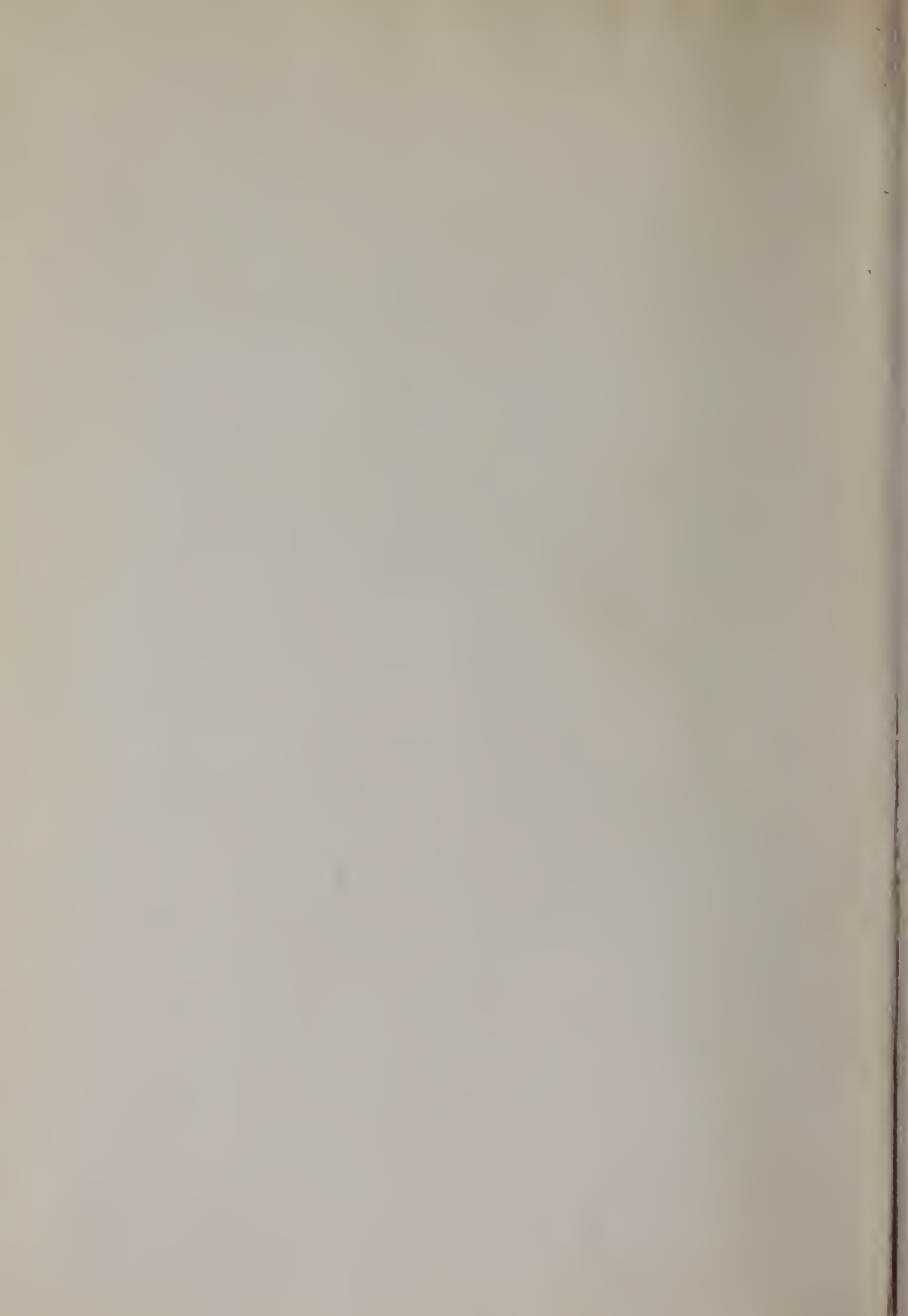


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AMERICA	THE MACMILLAN COMPANY 64 & 66 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK
AUSTRALASIA . .	THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 205 FLINDERS LANE, MELBOURNE
CANADA	THE MACMILLAN COMPANY OF CANADA, LTD. 27 RICHMOND STREET WEST, TORONTO
INDIA	MACMILLAN & COMPANY, LTD. MACMILLAN BUILDING, BOMBAY 309 BOW BAZAAR STREET CALCUTTA



"BLOW, BLOW, THOU WINTER WIND."

Exhibited at the Royal Society of British Artists and at the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, 1902.

TOM BROWNE, R.I.

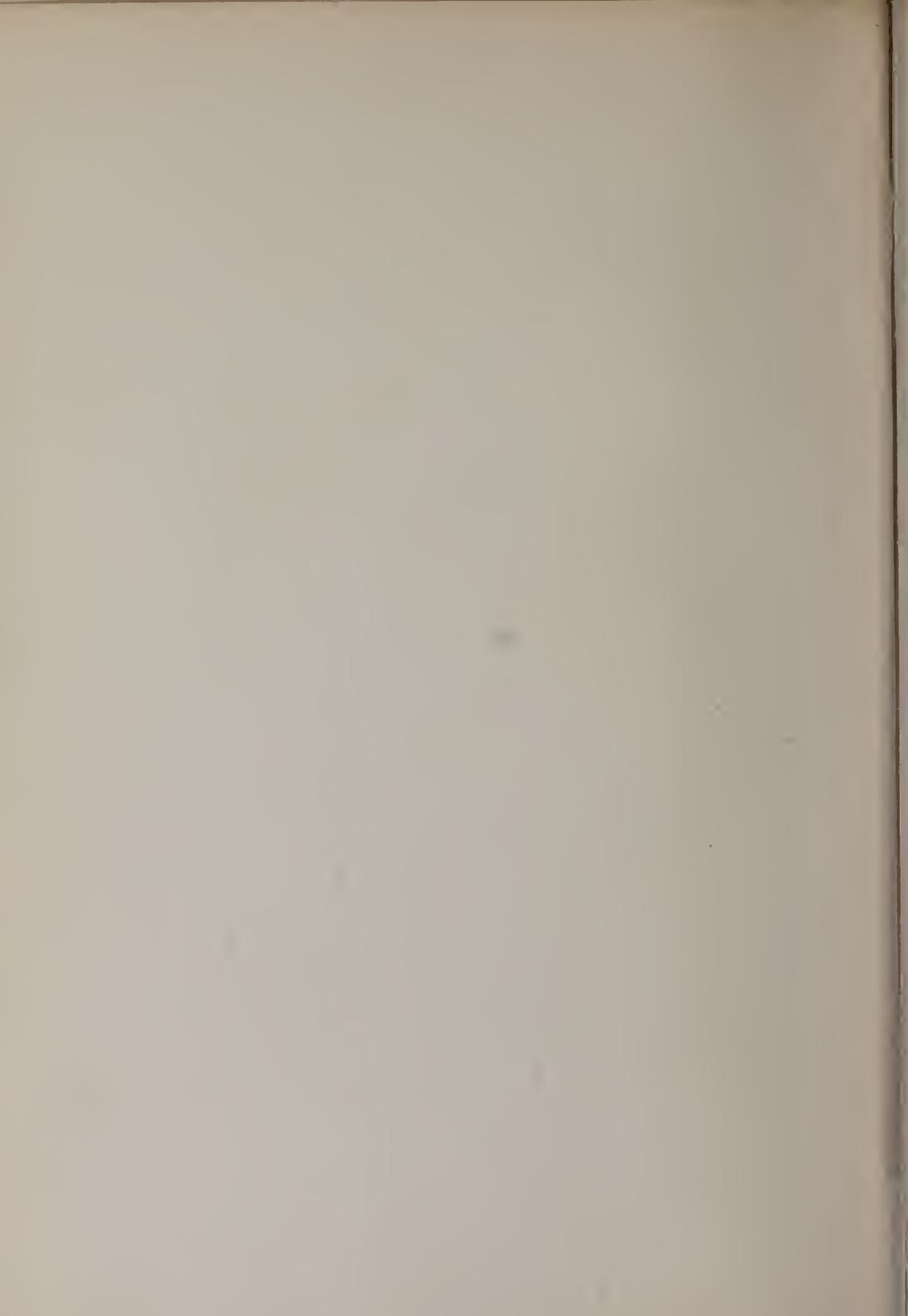
BY

A. E. JOHNSON

CONTAINING 57 EXAMPLES
OF THE ARTIST'S WORK
IN BRUSH, PEN, AND PENCIL



LONDON
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK
1909



PREFATORY NOTE

IN commencing the issue, under the title of "Brush, Pen, and Pencil," of the series of books of which the present volume forms part, the publishers felt that they were meeting a demand which had long existed but had previously not been supplied, and the reception accorded to the earlier volumes indicates that their opinion was correct. It is an unfortunate circumstance of the conditions which affect the modern artist who chooses black and white as his principal medium, that as a general rule his work—or, at all events, the reproduction of it—is ephemeral only. In respect of much that appears in the illustrated Press this is small matter for regret; but there is good reason to believe that the opportunity of obtaining in permanent form some record of the work of the leading men amongst those

PREFATORY NOTE

artists who work for the Press is welcome. Such an opportunity is provided by the present series ; and it is hoped that in the volumes composing it the public will have pleasure in finding representative examples of the work with brush, pen, and pencil of the men whose skill and fancy have from time to time delighted it.

For permission to reproduce some of the drawings by Mr. Tom Browne which appear in the present volume the publishers wish to acknowledge the courtesy of Messrs. Bradbury, Agnew and Co., Ltd., proprietors of *Punch*, and the proprietors of the following publications : *The Illustrated Sporting & Dramatic News*, *The London Magazine*, *Fry's Magazine*, *The Daily Chronicle*, and *The Weekly Telegraph*. Several of the drawings reproduced made their first appearance in *The Tatler*, and the American sketches are mostly from *The New York Times* and *The Chicago Tribune*.

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and elsewhere*





ARTFUL CARDS
OR
SHARPS AND FLATS

By kind permission of "The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News,"

TOM BROWNE. I.

TOM BROWNE is an artist popular in a very literal sense of the word. He belongs to the people, he is of them. He understands them, they him: sympathy is mutual. Other artists, equally and in certain directions perhaps even more observant, perceive particular aspects of the populace—fasten, as it were, upon individual phases which make peculiar appeal to their individual temperaments. Few have that comprehensive knowledge of the people which is derived only from instinctive sympathy. Tom Browne has it—a rare, almost an unique possession. Let the popular mood be what it will, Tom Browne finds himself *en rapport*. He does not need, consciously at all events, to observe: he knows.

Hence his name, in these days, is a household word. The assertion is not a wild or vaunting one. It is merely true. It would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to point to another artist whose name is more familiar, whose distinctive touch is more readily recognised, throughout *every* section of society. Impose limits and the claim to priority is withdrawn: let the field be open,

TOM BROWNE

and a plebiscite will probably return Tom Browne head of the poll.

Beside the popularity of Tom Browne



CHIEF
WARDEN
OF THE
TOWER OF
LONDON.

A CARICATURE

pales even that which belonged to Phil May, to whom he has been superficially likened by not very penetrating critics. In the vogue which he enjoyed Phil May had this advantage over the humorous draughtsmen who preceded him, that in his day occurred that sudden and rapid development of mechanical processes of reproduction, to which the

instant sequel was the cheapening and multiplication of the illustrated papers. Thus he was able to reach a larger public than had been attainable previously. His keen observation of externals, his intuitive perception of character, his knowledge of human nature, his good humour and attitude of easy tolerance carried him into instant



A. LOWLANDER.

Exhibited at the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours, 1905.

POPULARITY

favour and secured for him a popular success which had fallen to no artist before.

Such success in even greater measure Tom Browne has achieved, by means which can be quite simply analysed. The adventitious aid lent by the greater facilities of reproduction he has enjoyed in an increased degree, for the process-block has been the subject of continuous improvement during recent years. In addition, though some may consider that he lacks the subtlety of intention, the incisiveness of execution which marked the work of Phil May, he has the virtue of the defect. That is to say, he has gained for that very reason a wider and more genuine *popularity* than was ever proffered to Phil May. Wonderfully sympathetic as the latter was in his portrayal of the people, his attitude towards them had a certain intellectual quality of aloofness. He knew them through and through, but as a



98° IN THE SHADE

TOM BROWNE

physician knows his patient. He delighted, with unerring touch, to put his finger on their foibles—but always as an onlooker.



A SOUTHEAST SKETCH

Tom Browne, too, knows the people inside out, but he views them from their own standpoint. He is one of them, he sees things as they see them — only a little more clearly. He is in the thick of the throng, and though he pauses now and then to look about him and observe the

humours of his fellows, he never detaches himself.

The popular mind rejoices in Tom Browne because it finds in him a means of expression—no lame and halting expression moreover, but an amazingly witty and pointed articulateness. A famous preacher once confessed that the secret of popular



PAGEANT PASSION AT WINKLE-ON-SEA

From "The Tatler"

POPULARITY

eloquence lay in the knack of "gathering up from your audience in a mist what you return upon them in a cloud." The phrase explains exactly the hold which Tom Browne has upon the popular affections. He represents the normal notion. If the man-in-the-street could draw at all, his instinct would be to draw like Tom Browne. The subject of his picture would be just such a subject as Tom Browne chooses, the humour of it would be in Tom Browne's vein, and the treatment of it would be in such terms of line or wash as Tom Browne's pen and brush are wont to work in.

Perhaps it should be remarked here that for the moment it is Tom Browne the black-and-white humorist whom we have under consideration. Tom Browne the painter reveals an aspect that must be referred to later. In such brief introductory remarks as these it is natural to have regard mainly to that aspect of the man which is most familiar, and it is in his capacity as the people's artist-in-ordinary, so to speak, that Tom Browne appears to the writer to be most characteristic. Conceivably there are some, of supercilious turn, who may

TOM BROWNE

affect to condemn so literally plebeian an office. The more discerning will probably agree that the bare claim to such a title argues the possession, in mental qualities, of intelligence, sympathy, wit, and observation beyond the common, and in manual skill a felicity of expression masterly in its directness and simplicity, accuracy of intention, and sureness of execution.



"WONT YER COME 'OME BILL BAILEY?"

A SKETCH AT SOUTHEND-ON-SEA

TOM BROWNE. II.

"TOM BROWNE is not the son, or grandson, of Hablot K. Browne." We have the authority of the representative of the *New York World*, who greeted the artist on his first arrival in the United States, for this interesting, if negative, information, and there is no intention to dispute its truth. It may be added, indeed, to dispel all possible misapprehension as to identity, that there is orthographical evidence that the subject of these lines is in no way connected with the Tom Brown of whose school days a well-known narrative exists.



SKETCHED IN GERMANY

Tom Browne's school days were associated not with Rugby, but with Nottingham, his native town, where he received his early education at St. Mary's National School. Moreover, there is little connected with them out of which a narrative could be constructed. The first chapter of interest in the artist's career opened in 1882, when

TOM BROWNE

he was taken from school and became, as he himself has pithily expressed it, "a realisable family asset." It was at the tender age of

eleven, in brief, that he took his place in the fighting ranks of those who have to struggle daily for existence, his earliest employments being as an errand-boy—first at a milliner's and then in the lace market.

It was a low rung of the ladder from which to start. Is it matter for wonder, when his early days are considered, that Tom Browne should reveal in his drawings such intuitive knowledge of

men and things? His is the temperament of the man who is a part of all that he has met, and seldom has the lot of any afforded such opportunities for the study of all sorts and conditions of men. It cannot be too emphatically pointed out that though Tom Browne's work—or such of it as has chiefly



"NOBODY'S BEEN A' HITTIN' OF HIM—
'E'S SWALLERED A WORM!"



DOCTOR : Well, Mrs. Muggeridge, how are you getting on? Taken the medicine, eh?

MRS. MUGGERIDGE : Yes, doctor, I've taken all the tabloids you sent and now I want a new persecution.

By kind permission of "Punch"

EARLY DAYS

gained him his popularity—has been mostly “comic,” the success of its humour has for basis a solid appreciation of character and knowledge of human nature.

After rubbing shoulders for a year or two, in his itinerant capacity, with the life of the streets, the boy changed his job, and entered the employ of a firm of lithographic printers. He drew no pay, being intended for an apprentice, but the fact that he was ostensibly to be engaged in designing—for already there were indications of his latent talent—made amends for this otherwise discouraging condition.



THE VILLAGE INN

TOM BROWNE

Events, however, proved the new employment to be hardly so attractive as had been hoped, and in the course of a year it came to an end. Tom Browne remained, however, in the lithographic trade. It was fortunate that he did so, for though his salary from the firm to which he was now apprenticed as designer at first amounted only to one shilling a week, with a munificent annual rise of one shilling and sixpence, he found opportunities for the development of his true bent which, though limited, were sufficient to lead him eventually to his proper vocation.



A SKETCH IN
GERMANY

In his leisure hours he turned his hand to the execution of such odd jobs as he could pick up. The beginnings were small, and included such curious commissions as the designing of labels for cigar boxes. The promise of future success did not seem very bright, but Tom Browne, with characteristic energy and real grit, did the best of which he was capable and was game to tackle anything that offered. Experience

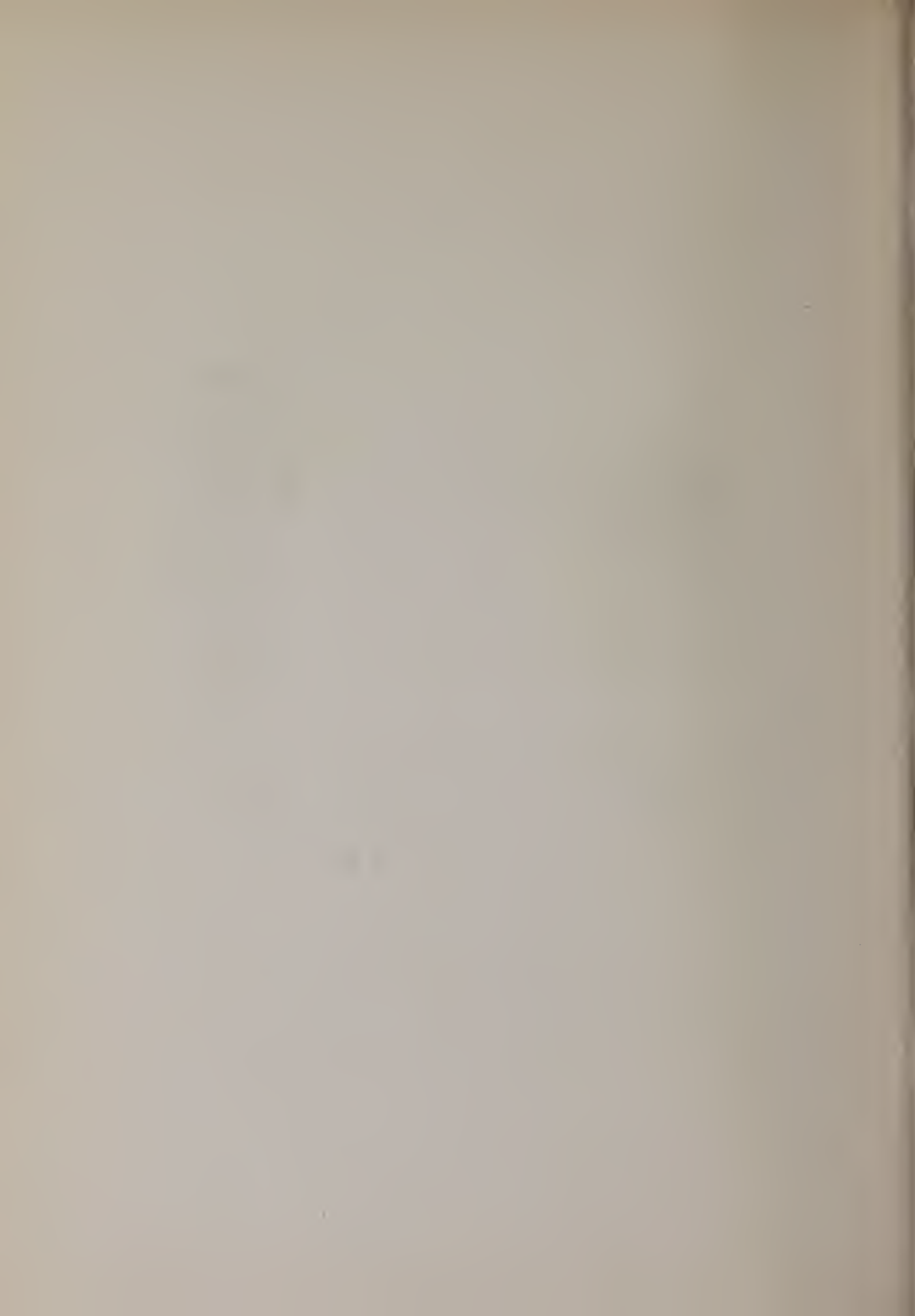


HOLDING OUT THE OLIVE BRANCH

"Uncle FitzMidas had quarrelled with us.—We were estranged.—We ventured to invite him at Christmas time.—He accepted with delight.—*We offered him the olive branch.* . . . We haven't seen him since . . . and there is an end to our great expectations."

Extract from despairing letter of Georgina to dear friend.

By kind permission of "Punch"



BEGINNINGS

teaches : and who shall say that useful lessons cannot be learned even from a tobacco-nist's label.

It was not until he had reached the age of seventeen that Tom Browne discovered his own possibilities as a humorous draughtsman, or at least discovered the monetary possibilities of that kind of work. Frequently, to amuse his friends, he had made comic drawings of incidents and types that had caught his fancy, but the making of these sketches he had never regarded as other than an idle occupation. Then a friend persuaded him to send some to the comic papers. Half reluctantly he did so, and his gleeful astonishment may be imagined when several were not only bought by the editor of *Scraps*, but paid for, to the tune of 30s. That sum represented three months' pay at the wages the



GERMAN SKETCH

TOM BROWNE

artist was then receiving from his lithographic firm, and at once a dazzling pathway to wealth beyond the dreams of avarice was revealed to his eager eyes.



Eking out his slender resources by occasional outside work of this sort Tom Browne presently reached the end of his apprenticeship, and arrived at man's estate with a considerably wider and more varied experience of life than is the possession of most lads of one-and-twenty. He was bound, of course, to find his way to the metropolis, but before he turned his steps towards London, he spent a further term of two

18





THE MIDDAY REST.

By kind permission of C. Kay Robertson, Esq.

BEGINNINGS

years in Nottingham, preparing for the great event. In a sense those two years comprised Tom Browne's artistic education : for though the only formal training he ever received was in the course of attendance during two months at a local art school (which he found, incidentally, very dull), that intermediate period was devoted to assiduous practice and self-tuition upon original and individual lines, while the personal freedom added to the already considerable store of experience he had accumulated, and was invaluable in the development and increase of his mental equipment.

Joining forces with sundry kindred spirits he became part tenant of a studio. Such, in courtesy, it must be termed, though some might consider the apartment occupied as scarcely worthy of the name. It was, in fact, a kind of loft above a small and not too salubrious stable in an obscure yard. Here the little band of novices, whose cheerfulness was of the same measure as their impecuniosity, worked merrily together in the serious pursuit of Art, with a capital A. They shared between them the household duties of their common workshop, and with

TOM BROWNE

a freedom which only good humour would permit, criticised each other's efforts. For models they scoured the streets of the city, and many were the strange characters captured in this fashion and carried off in triumph to pose upon the soap-boxes which served as model-throne. The greatest prize was generally admitted to be a coal-black negro, who temporarily left his occupation of chewing glass inside public houses, in order "to be painted," only on the repeated assurance that the paint would come off.

But fate, in the person of a landlord with a sordid desire for rent, interrupted these joyous days, and the little coterie was presently dispersed. By this time, however, Tom Browne had so far profited by diligence and persistence that he had sufficient store to venture a plunge into London. To London he came, and entered upon a stern struggle to earn a living, not only by his wits but by his wit.

Gradually the small connection among editors and publishers which he had established while still in the Midlands was expanded. Fleet Street, seldom obtuse in

COMIC CREATIONS

its powers of discernment, was not slow to recognise the new talent which Tom Browne brought into the field, though naturally the beginnings were small. His first big success, commercially speaking, came when he was asked to suggest a new means of filling the front page of a halfpenny comic paper. Tom Browne responded by producing Weary Willie and Tired Tim, two comic creations who established themselves as firmly in the popular favour as that equally remarkable, and perhaps more celebrated character, Ally Sloper. It is easy, with lofty gesture, to dismiss as unworthy of serious consideration such inventions as these. Tom Browne himself is inclined to wave aside the joyous ghosts of his inimitable pair of tramps and their successors. But the truth remains that only an artist possessed of remarkable intuition could receive so happy an inspiration—could so precisely embody the popular conception of humour; and when a history of humorous art of the present period in this country comes to be written, Weary Willie and Tired Tim, with Ally Sloper, will have not less claim, it may be soberly prophesied,

TOM BROWNE

upon the historian's attention than other more dignified fictions.



THE GERMAN STUDENT

Be that as it may, the success of Tom Browne's whimsical creations was instant and enormous. Those were the days of a "boom" in halfpenny comic papers, and such was the popularity achieved by the quaintly humorous pair of rascals that the circulation of one paper recording their adventures went up with a bound to 600,000 copies weekly. At once it became urgently necessary that every halfpenny comic paper should have its front page similarly adorned. One might have thought that once the idea had been presented to the public imitation



A VANISHING RACE

Exhibited at the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours, 1907



COMIC CREATIONS

would be easy, and that scores of comic draughtsmen could be found capable of perpetrating the necessary plagiarisms. But although many tried, none could quite hit upon Tom Browne's happy knack—and that fact has not a little significance in a general consideration of the artist's humorous work. Consequently he had the market at his mercy. Prices were good, as they could afford to be, and when it is mentioned that at one time Tom Browne was turning out regularly seven sets of six drawings apiece weekly, it will be seen that he did not lack profit from his skill. The theme, the same throughout with the slightest superficial differences, was simple enough — two grotesquely absurd characters passing (in the course of the sequence of six drawings) through various ridiculous adventures. Many a parent of



A CARICATURE

TOM BROWNE

such a ribald family might have been hard pressed to find each week occupations numerous enough to engage them. But Tom Browne has never been lacking in fertility of comic invention, and the task of making his fantastic puppets dance proved an easy one, until at length they had sufficiently served his purpose and were finally thrown aside.

By this time his reputation as a humorous artist was firmly established. For Weary Willie and Tired Tim, and their cousins, however numerous, had by no means absorbed all his energies. Their function had been to boil the pot—and right merrily had they kept it boiling.

Elsewhere Tom Browne had been equally active, and his more careful, though not less spontaneous efforts had been appearing with increasing regularity in the weekly illustrated papers, and finally in *Punch*. The next step



WALKING
THROUGH THE
BLACK FOREST.

A GERMAN SKETCH





ONE TOO MANY FOR HIM

SARCASTIC BOOKIE : Afraid they aint good ?

CANNY SCOT : Man, aa was just wunnering if the bad yin aa gied ye is among them !

From "The Tarler."

PAINTER

was his development in another direction, and he began to be known as a painter.

Not long after he came to London he had been introduced to the Langham Sketching Club by Dudley Hardy (with whom he was later one of the founders of the London Sketch Club, an offshoot of the older institution), and at the Friday evening meetings there he worked assiduously. His first picture in the Royal Academy was hung in 1897, and he has been a pretty regular contributor to Burlington House ever since. In 1898 he was made a member of the Royal Society of British Artists, and in 1901 a member of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water-Colours.

There are some who think that with the brush he is happier than with pen or pencil, and that Tom Browne the painter rivals Tom Browne the black-and-white draughtsman. Whether in his later *rôle* he will eclipse the success which he has gained in his earlier remains to be seen. Possibly he will solve the question by achieving the difficult feat of maintaining a reputation in either.



IN BOSTON, U.S.A.

TOM BROWNE. III.

IT has already been remarked that the humour of Tom Browne is founded upon a solid basis. Many of his pen-and-ink drawings, it is true, are laughter-raising merely in their superficial qualities. His acute sense of the absurd, and his subtle knack of elaborating the eccentric into the ridiculous without disclosing where the dividing line between the two is passed, enables him to summon up at will the idle, thoughtless smile. Amusement so provoked, however, is but a momentary mood which passes as lightly as it came. It is the accompaniment rather of the harlequinade than of the play. Genuine humour must bear some relation to truth. It is allied with comedy rather than with farce, and the test of the true humorist is his strength in the former vein. Given certain shallow qualities, clowning is easy: comedy demands observation, sympathy, and understanding.

Now Tom Browne, though as droll and whimsical a *farceur*, when he chooses, as the most rollicking companion could desire, is capable of far greater depths of feeling than such irresponsible nonsense demands. He



CHARACTER-STUDY

has the readiness, the nimble wit, the quick eye for opportunity of the buffoon : he has also that sense of character and power of analysis which penetrates beneath the surface and enables an artist to reveal as well as merely to transcribe.



Even in the wildest of his absurdities Tom Browne exhibits this sense of character. The laughable effect he achieves is not wholly derived from the ludicrous situation depicted, but depends, for the spirit of conviction with which it is invested, upon its ultimate relation to truth—however far removed. He draws for our amusement, let us say, a sketch of a stout old gentleman sprinting merrily in pursuit of an omnibus. The poor man is stouter than was ever the most threatened victim of apoplexy, while as to his gait and the action of his limbs, the oldest conductor on the route never saw such an apparition in the wake of his 'bus. He is, in brief, grotesquely exaggerated—and yet one feels instinctively certain, firstly that an old gentleman *might* be as stout as that, and secondly, that in such case, *if* he were to pursue a 'bus he would do so exactly in the manner depicted.

TOM BROWNE

For a definite example consider the sketch made in a café on a summer's afternoon (p. 3), which is a good instance of what one may term a portrait untruthfully faithful to life. Just where the artist has overstepped the boundary of actual fact it is impossible to say, though it is obvious that liberties have been taken with the subject. Exaggeration is, of course, a thing easily effected, but so happily to hit the mean between realism and caricature is one of Tom Browne's peculiar faculties.

Similarly in the two or three sketches of German types reproduced on other earlier pages, one perceives the same subtle restraint in exaggeration. It may seem, at first sight, that the students, the tourists, the military, are caricatured—at the least, unkindly satirised. The tourist is surely too completely and ludicrously dressed for his part, the student too riotously bacchanalian, the officer too stiffly starched. Yet those who have travelled observantly in Germany will hardly dispute the truthfulness of the portraits. If they err at all, it is on the side of fidelity—the students, let us say, are more like German students than German students ever were!





SOME IMPRESSIONS OF A BASEBALL MATCH

From the "New York Times"

CHARACTER-STUDY

In the fault of the sketches lies their merit, and in the paradox thus achieved is the vindication of the artist's skill.

The whimsical drawing on p. 5, which depicts the possible effect of the recent craze for "pageants" upon a small seaside town, provides a typical example of Tom Browne's broadest vein of humour. In its wealth of comic invention, its rollicking fun, and the infectious spirit of exuberant gaiety with which its absurd details are joyously worked out, it illustrates admirably the peculiar qualities of its author as a jester : and at the same time betrays that sense of character without which the whole thing would fall flat. Every figure in the preposterous procession, from the gleefully important policeman at the head of the four cleverly contrasted longshoremen leading the "Sons of the Sea Society," down to the kiddies on the kerbstone and the select boarders behind the garden wall, is a study of character. It is its ultimate relation to actual fact, however distant, which gives the whole that engaging air of spontaneous probability which is the secret of its humour.

If evidence be needed of Tom Browne's



TOM BROWNE



sense of character and knowledge of human nature, as distinct from the comic possibilities of faces and figures, let the reader consider such sketches of cockney types as *Derby Day* (facing p. 8), or the study entitled *The Horse Coper* facing page 50. There is humour in the latter, of course, but no farce. It is not comic : it is merely a faithful study from life. "Study" one says advisedly, for the sketch (as perhaps will be obvious to the sympathetic mind) is imaginary—not drawn from a model. It represents the image evolved, by an unconscious process of selection, from the accumulated impressions of an observant eye : the only method by which an artist can *convincingly* portray a type.

Tom Browne, indeed, never employs models in his work. That is not to say, of course, that he never draws from life, for few artists are more diligent in making sketches of whatever of interest meets his eye. No matter where, or in what circumstances, anything worthy of note which presents itself is jotted down in the form of a hasty sketch, to serve later on as a sort of mnemonic—a germ from which is elaborated the subsequent study or picture. Tom



Tom Browne

ONE KIND OF UNEMPLOYED

From the "Chicago Tribune."





OLD CRONIES.

Exhibited at the Royal Academy, 1901, and at the St. Louis Exhibition, U.S.A., 1904.

CHARACTERISTICS

Browne is nothing if not alert : his pencil is a ready tool, and his sketch-books contain a mass of material, collected at all sorts of times and in all sorts of places, which may be described almost literally as his stock-in-trade. There are drawers in his studio full of sketches and studies from life.

In one sense of the phrase, therefore, Tom Browne may be said to employ models abundantly. But drawing from the posed model in the studio is a method which he has never followed. The retentiveness of his memory to a great extent obviates any such necessity, and it is easy to imagine that the certain measure of laborious care, which work from the posed model inevitably demands, would hardly accord with the readiness of ideas, fertility of invention, and facility of execution which are perhaps Tom Browne's outstanding characteristics.

Those characteristics are well exhibited by his humorous pen-and-ink drawings. To his readiness and resource the latter owe the delightful air of spontaneity with which they are invested. Their maker is never at a loss : the action of them, consequently,

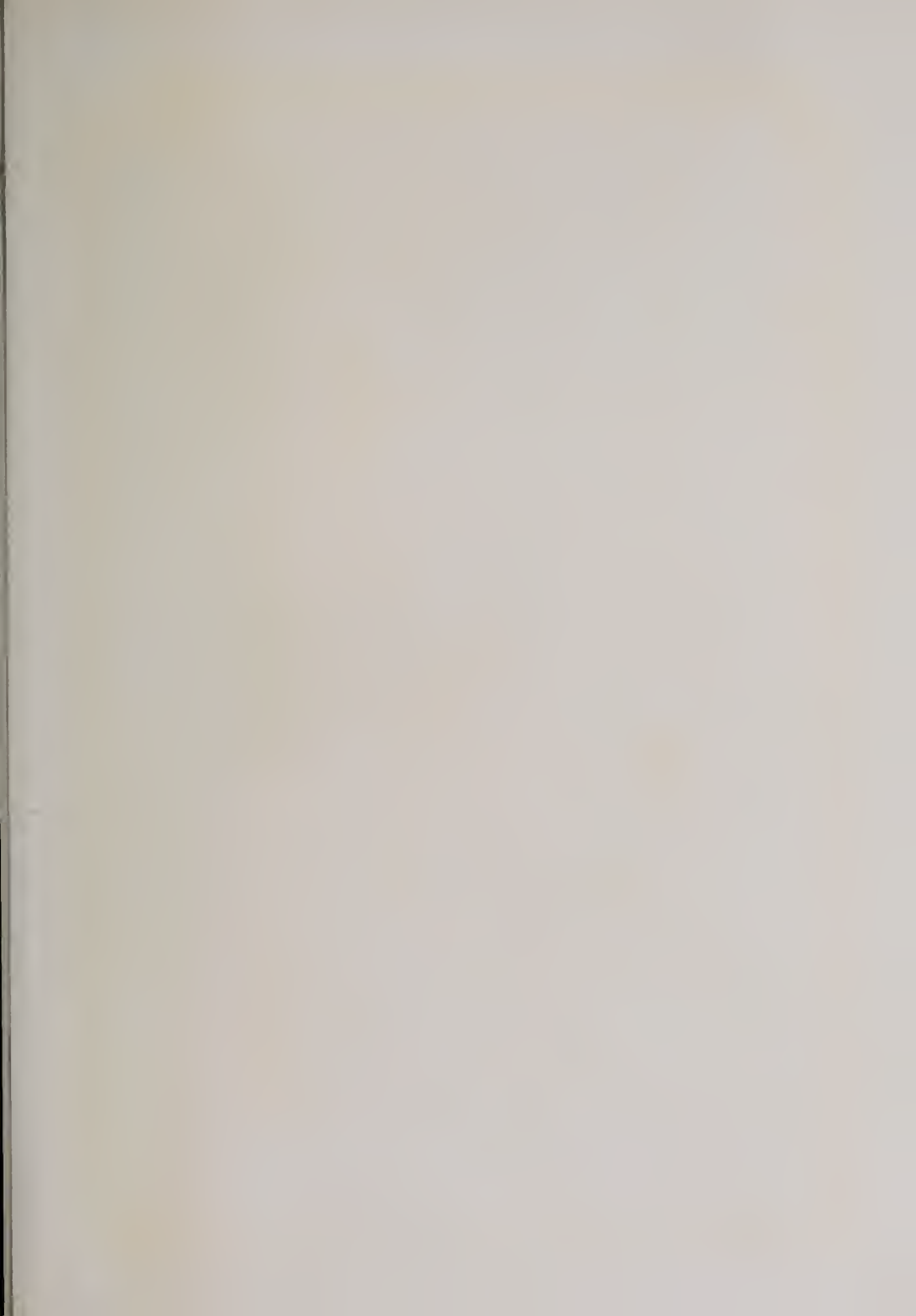


TOM BROWNE

never halts or stumbles. The bold, simple lines, so direct, so sure, suggest the ease and rapidity of his hand. He has so clearly in his mind what he wishes to depict, he knows so instinctively the simplest means by which his intention can be expressed, that all he needs is pen, ink, and paper—and the thing is done ! To watch Tom Browne producing one of those “lightning sketches” with which he amuses his friends at the Savage Club and elsewhere, to see the delightfully free flourish of his hand as he makes the telling and incisive strokes, is to witness an interesting exposition of the artist’s power of concentration and mental rapidity, and to receive a striking lesson in the art of drawing from that best of models—memory.

The versatility of the artist finds a parallel in the many-sided activity of the man. The brisk action and vigorous energy, which give such liveliness to his work, have their counterpart in the keen thoroughness with which Tom Browne engages in the numerous pursuits that occupy his leisure hours. Like all very busy men, he seems to have endless time to spare, the reason being, of







THE STRAIGHT TIP

SPONGING FRIEND OF THE FAMILY : Thomas, my good fellow, how soon will the dinner come up?

FOOTMAN : The very moment you be gone, sir.

From "The Tatler."

CHARACTERISTICS

course, that when he works he does so furiously, and when he turns to recreation, or other occupations, he is equally in earnest. He rides to hounds, he drives, he shoots, he sails, he plays tennis, bowls, golf, and billiards. Most especially was he wont, at one time, to cycle, and his tours abroad on the wheel have provided him with rich material for sketches and pictures. Indeed, during the prosperous period of the cycle trade about a decade ago, he had a celebrity quite unique as a "cycle artist." He contributed extensively to such journals as *Cycling*, and the now defunct *Wheel*, *Cycle*, *Cycle Magazine*. For the last-named he undertook a bicycle ride from Paris to Gibraltar, and made many other journeys on the continent.

It must be added that Tom Browne holds non-commissioned rank in the City of London (Rough Riders) I.Y., and his readiness for any new



TOM BROWNE

experience has even led him to sustain sundry rôles in the recent pageants of the annual Lord Mayor's show !

For half measures Tom Browne has, as the phrase goes, no use. Naturally his rate of production is prodigious. While daylight holds he paints ; his black-and-white drawings are put aside until the evening, when he works steadily, and with amazing speed, at what he has on hand until it is finished. " When I send a story to an artist for illustration," once remarked the editor of a certain magazine to me, " I naturally arrange that he shall have two or three weeks in which to execute the commission—and then most of them ask for an extension of time. Tom Browne's drawings come back by return of post, and they are generally the best of the lot ! "

His output of humorous drawings has been, and continues, amazing ; for though that fat miscellany *Tom Browne's Annual* no longer makes a yearly appearance, and the artist gives more time to painting, he still finds time to add abundantly to the gaiety of the nation.

TOM BROWNE. IV.

TOM BROWNE has journeyed twice to the United States, and his American visits have been productive of some of the happiest work in humorous vein from his pen. American social life, as even the untravelled can probably imagine, offers a rich field for humorous and satirical comment to an artist of Tom Browne's temperament, and the glee with which he seized his opportunities is evident from the spontaneous ease which marks his American sketches. There is an air of joyous abandon about them which increases the conviction they convey of deadly accuracy of aim. They do not merely hit the mark—they score a bull's-eye every time. As the observer turns from one lively sketch to another of the various street types and scenes, he feels instinctively that he has before him the very essence of the hustling life of an American city. The reader looks, for example, at the sketch of a Chicago policeman (p. 39), with his obtrusive club, or the stunted figure of the Dago street-cleaner on page 38, and, though he has never in his life seen Chicago, he



TOM BROWNE

is ready to swear that such and naught else are the true presentments of the living characters. "These," he murmurs to himself, borrowing an American idiom, "are IT!"



It would seem that the artist appreciated the "copy" that he met with such keen relish, and so rolled the flavour of it, if the metaphor be permitted, round his tongue, that when he came to set down his impressions in black-and-white he could not go wrong. His intuition was

so true that his touch was perforce unerring.

Certainly the American people provided Tom Browne with as fruitful a subject as he could anywhere find. He has made many clever studies of character, both broad and subtle, in foreign countries, but none better than his American sketches as examples of truthful exaggeration. Being not only English by birth, but essentially English by temperament, Tom Browne was quick to



CHICKEN BROTH, 11 A.M. R.M.S. TEUTONIC

From "The Tatler."



IN AMERICA

perceive and seize upon the American tendency towards what is best, perhaps, described (from the English point of view, be it understood) as naïve vulgarity—the phrase is used without the least intention of offence—which constitutes the chief difference (again from the English point of view) between Americans and English, and is the cause of that unconscious humour in the former by which the latter are often amused.

Tom Browne, in brief, true to his popular rôle, viewed the American type with typically English eyes. Consequently we find in his transatlantic sketch-books the exact expression of the normal Englishman's notions respecting the citizens of the United States. Whether Americans regard his exposition of their traits and foibles in the same, or at least a similar light, is another matter. At all events, if they do not find them quite so convincing, they have at least shown themselves capable of



TOM BROWNE

appreciating the skill and humour which they display. Tom Browne went to America on the first occasion for the purpose of drawing his impressions of the St. Louis Exhibition for *The Tatler*, but the American press speedily captured him. Not content that he should be among them taking notes of their funny little ways for the benefit of his countrymen at home, it was insisted that he should make pictures of Americans for Americans. Having obtained his acquiescence, the New York pressmen went to work with their wonted enthusiasm, and Tom Browne, before he quite knew what had happened, found himself (within limits) famous. Putting it in another way, he became a "boom," and during his sojourn in the States his sketches and cartoons were the most popular feature of the *New York Herald* and *New York Times* and other papers. Reference to p. 43 will enable the reader to form some idea of his emotions upon attaining to such a pinnacle of celebrity.



The success of his first visit to the States was so great that in May 1906 he crossed the Atlantic again, this time taking an engagement upon the *Chicago Tribune*, for



SALLY IN OUR ALLEY.

Exhibited at the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours, 1907



IN AMERICA

which paper he drew daily cartoons during a period of four months. Afterwards he went out to the Pacific coast, from Seattle in the north down to Los Angeles and Catalina in the south, and was in San Francisco four months after the great earthquake there. Varied experience has taught Tom Browne the knack of adapting himself to local requirements, but this is not his only qualification for such all-round newspaper work as at different times he has undertaken. Journalists share with poets the distinction of being born, not made, and Tom Browne possesses the native journalistic instinct. He has the intuitive eye not only for a good subject, but for the best treatment of it. Just as the mark of a capable journalist is the ability to turn the dullest topic to good account, so Tom Browne can be left, with complete assurance, to produce a live drawing



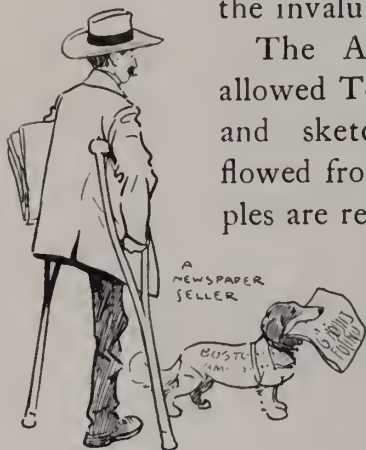
AN AMERICAN SKETCH

TOM BROWNE

upon any theme of human interest. The secret lies not so much in being able to treat any given subject graphically, as in so dealing with even the most unpromising matter as to endow it with pictorial possibilities. Hence arises his great success in what may be termed "commercial art." Posters, show-cards, and smaller designs for the use of advertisers, he has produced in large numbers, and few artists are more in demand for this purpose. In poster designing he has that knack of treating a pithily chosen subject in broad and simple style, which so many strive for and so few achieve, and all his commercial designs have the invaluable quality of directness.

The American editors wisely allowed Tom Browne a free hand, and sketches of endless variety flowed from his pen. A few examples are reproduced in these pages,

but obviously there is space only for a very small selection out of so much material. The reader will probably agree that Tom Browne

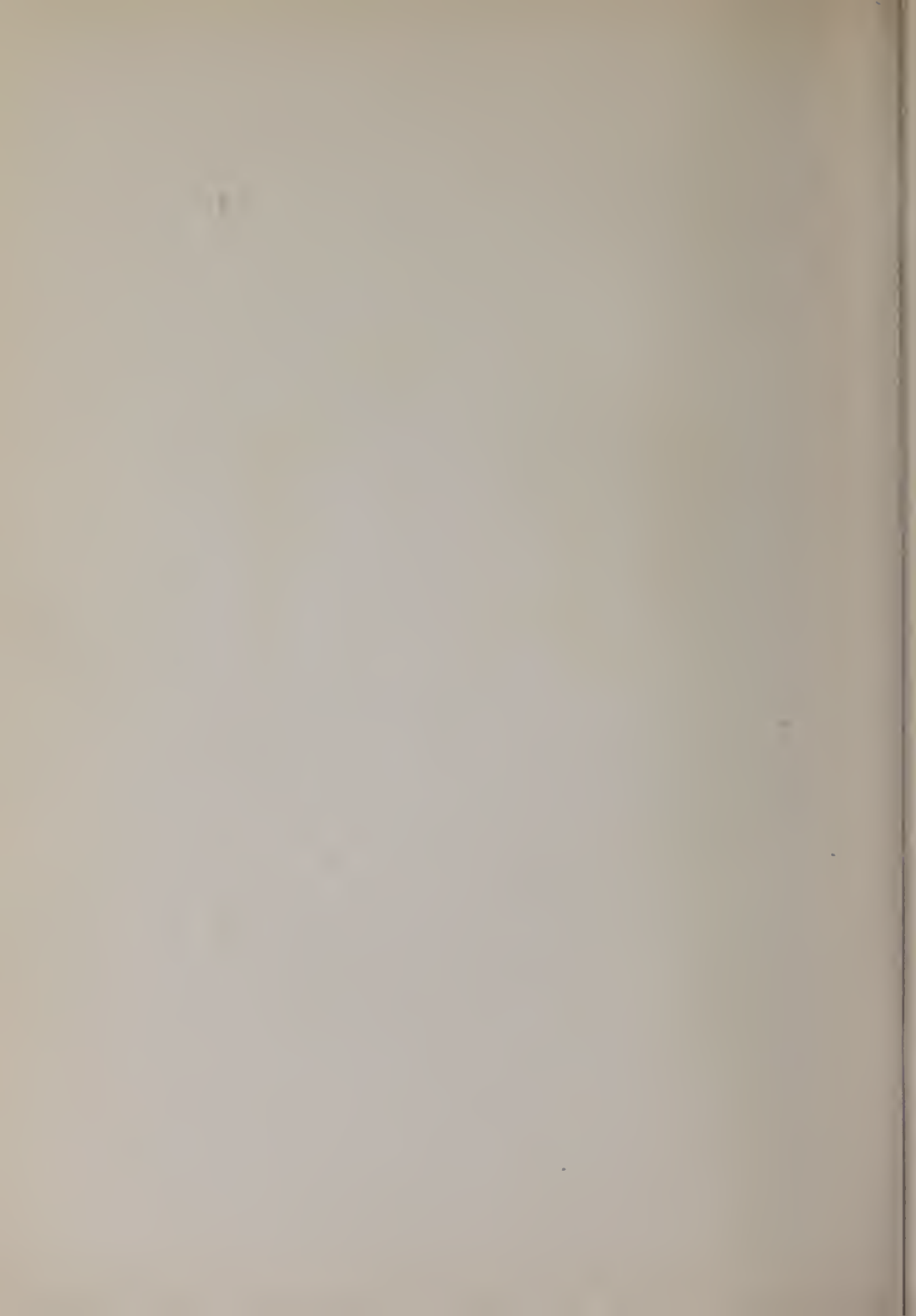


IN BOSTON, U.S.A.



THE PENALTY OF FAME

From the "New York Times"



IN AMERICA

as a humorist is here shown in his most exuberant and volatile vein. His strong sense of character is again apparent in his

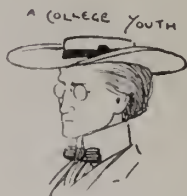


THE AMERICAN STUDENT

impressions of the passing faces and casual incidents of the street, which have moreover an air of genial candour that is most engaging—or in such caricatures as that entitled *Oyster Bay* (page 47), with its subtle suggestion of the ex-President's peculiar temperament.

TOM BROWNE

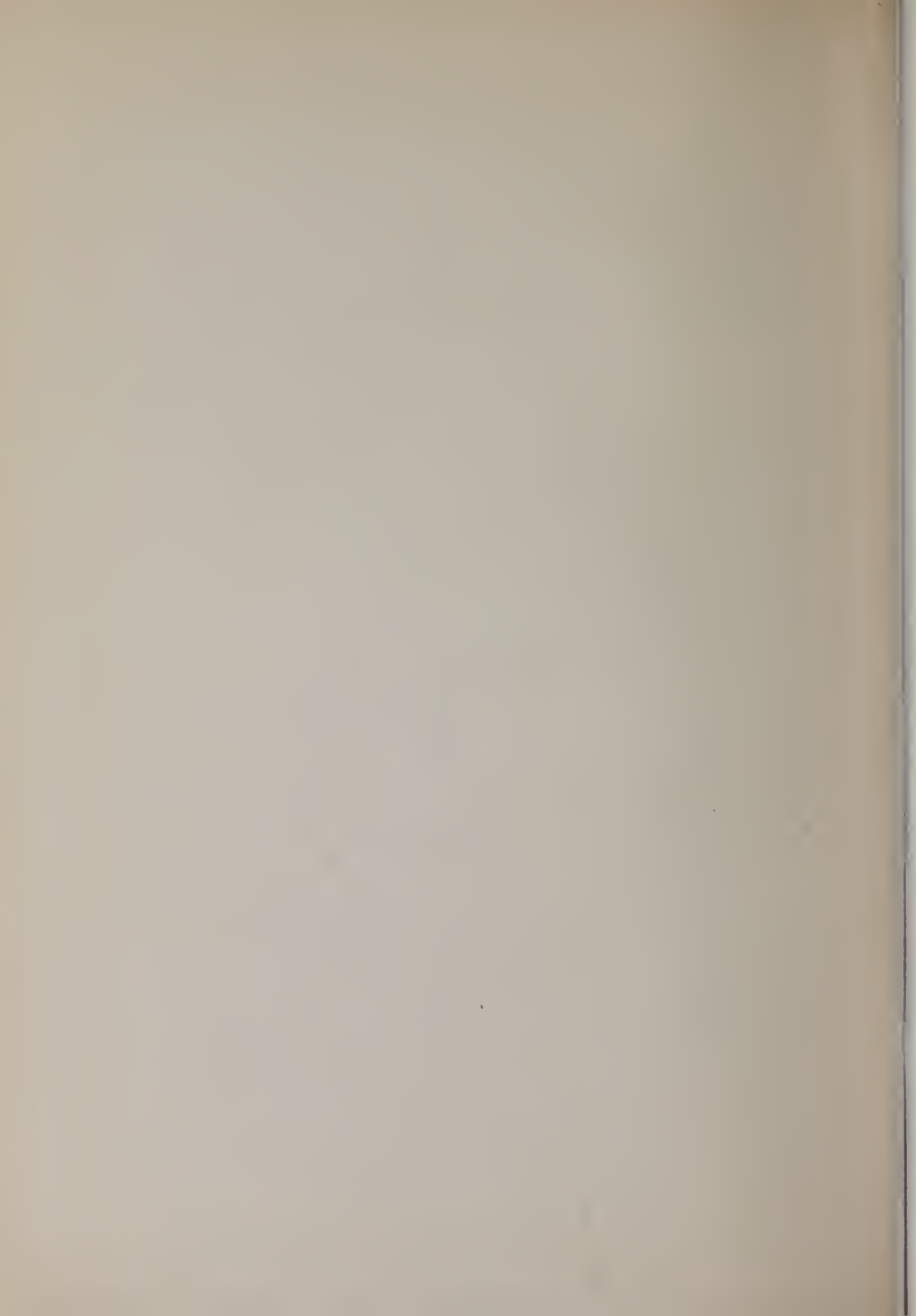
Incidentally, as a contrast in international character, the reader may be amused by a comparison of the student groups reproduced on pages 22 and 45 respectively.





OYSTER BAY

From the "Chicago Tribune."





THE CLOSE OF DAY.

Exhibited at the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours, 1902, and at the Franco-British Exhibition, London, 1908.
by kind permission of the Proprietors of Player's Navy Cut.

TOM BROWNE. V.

AS a black-and-white draughtsman Tom Browne long ago "found himself," and one has ceased to look for further things from him in that vein. The influence upon his pen-and-ink technique of earlier work, which had to meet the requirements of rapid printing on coarse paper, can be easily traced: but the "open" style which was the result of the conditions thus imposed has been developed to its limit, and with the pen he has reached the full measure of his accomplishment.

With the brush, however, it is otherwise, and it is as a painter that admirers of Tom Browne's talent will watch with interest his development. His own private ambitions have always been conceived in terms of paint, and amidst the multifarious occupations of his working hours he finds in his palette the greatest means of enjoyment.

His growth as a painter has been of peculiar interest, and a subject of no small surprise to many undiscerning observers who had supposed that the obvious limitations of humorous black-and-white work were also the limitations of the artist. They forgot the kin-

TOM BROWNE

ship between humour and sympathy, and did not credit the whimsical jester with the deeper qualities he has proved himself to possess. In the wider scope which the painter's art affords, Tom Browne has been able to do greater justice to his own self than the restrictions of the black-and-white medium would ever permit. His paintings reveal that he has not only a good eye for colour, and a true instinct for pictorial composition, but the subtler quality of "feeling," which is compound of sympathy and imagination, but impossible of reduction to precise verbal terms. In the light of his more serious work, the sense of character which dominates, as has been earlier remarked, his comic drawings in black-and-white, is seen to be derived from something more than superficial observation—to be sympathetic and not merely analytical.

Discussion of Tom Browne's paintings inevitably conjures up visions of the dykes, flat pastures, quaint villages and odd costumes of Holland, for the artist has made the Dutch people and their country peculiarly his own. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that Holland and the Dutch have captured Tom



THE HORSE COPER

By kind permission of "Fry's Magazine."



HOLLAND AND THE DUTCH

Browne, for year by year since, pictorially speaking, he "discovered" it—it is unquestionable that the Dutch vogue amongst



Charles G. F.

Friendly Overture

FROM A DUTCH SKETCH-BOOK

artists of recent years is in no small degree attributable to him—he has become increasingly enslaved to their fascination.

His first visit to Holland was on the occasion of a cycling tour abroad with a

TOM BROWNE

friend. The "paintableness" of the country at once impressed him, but it was some time before he gained a proper understanding of its characteristics and was able to work with corresponding success. His first essays were failures—not, as he explains, through lack of effort and industry, but through ignorance. Painting in Holland, he declares, is like beginning a new lesson—though the same, of course, holds good of any country, if the painter work with intelligence. In his first attempts at Dutch subjects Tom Browne painted what he thought he saw, but the result he perceived instinctively to be wrong. What was lacking he does not know to this day, but he surmises that he had not then arrived at a realisation of the all-pervading quietude of colour, the subtle delicacy of the ever-changing greys, which from a painter's point of view is the main characteristic of the district.

Further acquaintance with the country not only solved the initial problem encountered, but revealed many alluring charms, which renew their spell with every fresh visit. In few countries is it possible for an



MEMORANDUM FOR A PICTURE: FROM A DUTCH SKETCH-BOOK

TOM BROWNE

artist to obtain such a variety of subjects in one spot. Of pure landscape there is a rich field—in no sense of the monotony which might be expected in an uniformly flat district. For integral parts of the Dutch landscape are the winding, reed-fringed canals, with picturesque timber and thatched windmills rising above them, the masses of trees amidst which nestle red-roofed farm-houses, and the quaint villages straggling along the horizon—the latter, from the nature of the land, always close at hand. Such, too, are the cattle upon the pastures, the windmills which loom in the distance, the barges that glide along the still waterways.

So much the painter sees as he looks inland from his vantage-point on a dyke of the Zuyder Zee. If marine subjects be his vein he has but to turn his back upon the lush green pastures, and before him lies an endless variety of sky and sea, of curious shipping, and fantastic little harbours that are pre-eminently paintable. As to figure-subjects, the difficulty is not to find them, but to select with sufficient discrimination.







MINE HOST

By kind permission of "Fry's Magazine."

HOLLAND AND THE DUTCH

Moreover, apart from the wealth of subjects which it offers, Holland has the added charm of infinite variety in its atmospheric effects. Perhaps the pervading colour is grey—a grey of peculiar pearly delicacy, which, in Tom Browne's view, suggests the greys to be seen sometimes in Venice on a misty morning. And, though the prevailing tone is dull, Dutch colour is always clean, while for bright notes there are ample opportunities in the red-brown sails of the boats, in the red jackets worn by the fishermen in many localities, and the blue and purple costumes which are the most frequent garb of the women.

One might add much more, for indeed Tom Browne does not lack eloquence on the subject of his favourite sketching-ground. To Holland he returns again and again, and always, he says, to learn more. There are few parts of the country with which he is not intimately acquainted, and on the relative artistic merits of Dordrecht, Monnikendam, Hoorn, the Zuyder Zee, Marken, and other spots he has knowledge which is extensive and peculiar. His favourite resort, however, is Volendam—that delightful

TOM BROWNE

fishing village which straggles along the slope of the dyke that keeps out the Zuyder Zee, and curls round a quaint little harbour—and of all the many guests at the rare inn of host Spaander, for which the tiny place is justly celebrated amongst artists, none is more frequent than he.

Besides Holland, Spain has provided Tom Browne with subjects for numerous paintings. The contrast between the two countries is great, and though his Spanish pictures are full of character, he has hardly been so happy in them as in his Dutch scenes. The southern country made no irresistible appeal to his temperament. It would be strange if an artist who has so completely absorbed the *genius loci* of restful Holland should find equal inspiration in the dusty glare of Spain : if one who delights in the trim tidiness and amiable stolidity of the placid Dutchman should have sympathy with the savage abandon of the smouldering Spaniard.

From a sketching tour in Spain, indeed, the artist brought back no very grateful recollections of the people. Cycling from Paris to Gibraltar he passed through a con-



EVENING LIGHT - SPAIN.

Exhibited at the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours, 1904.





siderable part of the country, but that he and his machine reached the Rock intact was a matter for congratulation, and not, apparently, the fault of the peasantry whom he met over the route. In place of bread they offered him stones—and if the latter failed to hit him or his bicycle it was due to an inaccuracy of aim rather than of intention. His accursed wheel they endeavoured to wreck by day upon the road and its owner they occasionally attempted to rob by night. It must be even recorded as perhaps the worst of their crimes that they could not appreciate the talent of the stranger they received so inhospitably, for in one village, when Tom Browne, pursuing his usual plan of overcoming linguistic deficiencies by picturing his wants with a pencil, drew a careful study of a soup tureen, the innkeeper responded by producing the largest pail in the house !

The shifting scene which is the traveller's lot has, naturally, a keen fascination for an artist of such observant powers, and Tom Browne delights in ranging far afield in search of subjects. At the moment that these lines are published he is in the midst of

TOM BROWNE

a protracted tour, as special artist of *The Graphic*, through Egypt, China and Japan, and not less interesting than the delineations of Oriental character which may be expected from his pen will be the discovery of how his brush copes with the colour of the East.



PROPRIETOR OF TRAVELLING MENAGERIE : Are you used to looking after horses and other animals ?

APPLICANT FOR JOB : Yessir ! Been used to 'orses all my life.

PROPRIETOR : What steps would you take if a lion got loose ?

APPLICANT : Bloomin' long uns, mister.

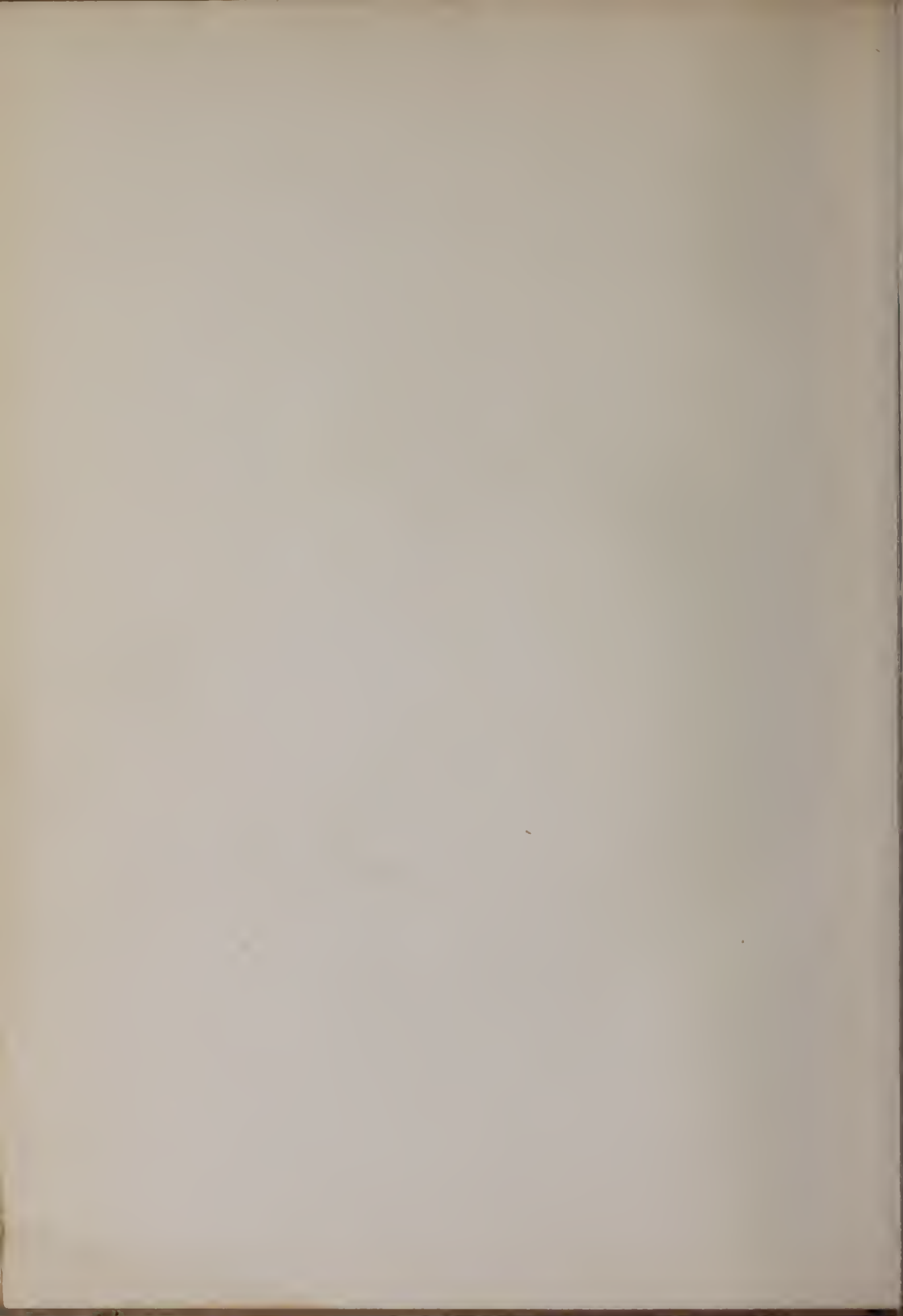
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RULES AND ETIQUETTE OF GOLF

"A ball lying in the fork of a tree must be played, or the player shall lose a stroke."

From "The Tatler"



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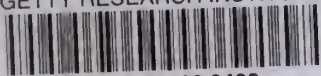
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